

AGENDA
SUISUN MARSH TECHCOMM MEETING

DWR, Environmental Services Office, Cafeteria Meeting Room
9:30 am, January 27, 2000

ADMINISTRATION

1. Agenda Changes, Announcements, and Other Business
2. October 28, 1999 Summary
3. Next meeting: 9:30 am, Thursday, April 27, 2000
DWR, Environmental Services Office,
Large Conference Room

DWR REPORT

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| 4. Water Quality Monitoring/SMSCG Ops. | Liz Cook |
| 5. SWRCB D-1641 | Kamyar Guivetchi |
| 6. SMSCG Modification test | Leslie Millett |
| 7. SMPA ECAT/Amendment Three | Terri Gaines |
| 8. CALFED Suisun Marsh Levee Subteam | Chris Enright |
| 9. Suisun Ecological Workgroup | Eliza Sater |
| 10. Morrow Island Fish Screen Project | Mike Floyd |

DFG REPORT

- | | |
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| 11. Island Slough Monitoring Plan | Laurie Thompson |
| 12. Update Letter to USFWS | Laurie Briden |
| 13. SM Vegetation Survey | Laurie Thompson |

SRCD REPORT

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| 14. Renewal of USACE Regional General Permit | Steve Chappell |
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OTHER BUSINESS

**MEETING SUMMARY
SUISUN MARSH TECHCOMM MEETING
October 28, 1999**

DWR, Environmental Services Office, Large Conference Room

ATTENDEES

Stephen Berger, RWQCB	Terri Gaines, DWR
Laurie Briden, DFG	Marla Macoubrie, USFWS
Steven Chappell, SRCD	Leslie Millett, DWR
Liz Cook, DWR	Eliza Sater, DWR
Melinda Dorin, DFG	Michele Simpson, NMFS
Chris Enright, DWR	Brad Tom, DWR
Mike Floyd, DWR	

ADMINISTRATION

Item 1 – Agenda Changes and Announcements

The TECHCOMM minutes/agenda packet will now be posted on the Suisun Marsh Program web site at <http://www.wiep.water.ca.gov/suisun/>. The format will be Adobe Acrobat (.pdf). An email will be sent to the group when the packet is posted.

Item 2 – July 29, 1999 Meeting Summary

No changes to the minutes.

Item 3 - Next TECHCOMM Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 27, 2000 at 9:30 am, DWR Central District Large Conference Room.

DWR REPORT

Item 4. Monitoring Station Update

Mike Floyd:

Annual monitoring station reconstruction/repair efforts in the Suisun Marsh have nearly been completed. The most significant work was performed at Station S-97 (Ibis). The station required complete reconstruction due to sloughing of the bank of

Cordelia Slough and the resultant destabilization of the station. The station is now supported by steel pilings and adjustable slip collars. The station's stilling well was removed as part of the reconstruction effort. A pressure transducer is now scheduled for installation at the station.

Item 5 – Water Quality Monitoring/1998 Annual Report

Liz Cook:

Water Quality June - October

High tide salinities in the Marsh , which were still very low in May following late seasonal storms, began rising in June. High tide salinities continued to rise through July reaching approximately 8 milliSeimens at the western marsh stations Morrow Island and Ibis. By the second half of August high tide salinities were rising rapidly such that by September they were ranging from approximately 6 milliSeimens at Collinsville and National Steel to about 12 - 14 at Morrow Island and Ibis. High tide salinities in September mostly remained at these levels though they did decline somewhat at several of the eastern Marsh stations in response to gate operations beginning on Sept 7, 1999.

Annual Report

The annual report for water year 1998 is under final review and should be ready for distribution within the next week. The 1999 annual report is now in progress and should be completed within the next 2-3 months.

Item 6 – 1996, 1997, 1998 SMSCG Annual Fisheries Monitoring Report

Eliza Sater:

The 1996 SMSCG Annual Fisheries Monitoring Report was completed and has been distributed to the mailing list. It is also available on the web at

<http://www.iep.ca.gov/suisun/>

The 1997 report is being published and will also be available on the web. The 1998 report is being drafted and covers all the same information as the previous reports. Additionally, the 1998 report evaluates whether DWR has completed all permit compliance obligations and will make recommendations for future Suisun Marsh fisheries evaluations. This report will be included as a chapter in the Comprehensive Review currently being completed by ESO staff.

Item 7 – SMSCG Modification Test

Leslie Millett:

Dissolved oxygen concentrations were monitored in Montezuma Slough in support of the gate modification test. Dissolved oxygen were of concern as they may have influenced the behavior of migrating salmon.

Continuous monitoring for dissolved oxygen concentrations in Montezuma Slough was performed at monitoring stations S-64 (National Steel) and S-71 (Roaring River). Monitoring operations at S-64 were accomplished using submersible multiparameter instrumentation. Monitoring operations at S-71 were accomplished using a boom-mounted dissolved oxygen probe connected to preexisting data logging equipment at the station. Submersible multiparameter instrumentation was installed at S-71 after flow-related oxygen depletion problems were experienced with the boom-mounted probe.

Dissolved oxygen concentration profiling was performed at 20 stations along Montezuma Slough from the former Van Sickle Island railroad crossing to Nurse Slough. Three profiling runs were performed coinciding with each of the three phases of the gate test.

Relatively significant dissolved oxygen concentration deficit conditions were observed during Phase 3 of the test. The greatest deficit conditions appeared to have occurred near the southern portion of Grizzly Island and the Montezuma Slough Salinity Control Gates. Dissolved oxygen concentration in the low 6s (milligrams per liter) and high 5s were observed. Dissolved oxygen deficit conditions in Montezuma Slough may have been the result of the discharge of pond water from adjacent managed wetlands.

The results of the dissolved oxygen monitoring effort in Montezuma Slough will be issued in a memorandum report to be completed within a few months.

Item 8 – SMPA ECAT

Terri Gaines:

The Suisun Marsh Preservation Agreement Environmental Coordination Advisory Team continues to meet monthly to discuss Suisun Marsh issues and mitigation obligations. Staff from DWR, US Bureau of Reclamation, California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) Grizzly Island, DFG Bay Delta, US Fish and Wildlife Service and the US Army Corps of Engineers participate. Topics discussed include consultation with the USFWS for Amendment Three to the Preservation Agreement and renewal of the SRCD regional maintenance permit. Formal consultation has been initiated and the final biological assessment has been received by the USFWS. We hope to receive a draft biological opinion in early 2000. ECAt also discusses the Morrow Island Distribution System (MIDS) mitigation requirements

including the required fish screen and potential alternatives to construction of the MIDS fish screen. Other topics include Suisun Marsh monitoring efforts including Suisun Marsh Harvest Mouse trapping, Suisun Marsh vegetation survey, and other monitoring efforts in Suisun Marsh.

Item 9 – CALFED Suisun Marsh Levee Subteam

Chris Enright:

The Suisun Marsh Levee Subteam has completed preliminary modeling on 10 alternatives for shallow water habitat and tidal marsh restoration in Suisun Marsh. An independent modeling investigation is being conducted by Resources Management Associates of Suisun City to corroborate results. The Team is preparing a report on modeling results for CALFED. The report will include a summary of model results in matrix form. The report is intended to be ready by April 2000.

Item 10 – Suisun Ecological Workgroup

Eliza Sater:

All but one subcommittee report has been submitted for inclusion in the final report. The final report will include reports from the Brackish Marsh Vegetation subcommittee, Waterfowl subcommittee, Aquatic Habitat subcommittee, Water Quality and Hydrology subcommittee, two different reports from the Wildlife Subcommittee, an alternative recommendation from Frank Wernette, an evaluation of data gaps and recommendations for elements of a comprehensive monitoring program. The final report should be completed by the first week in November and will then be submitted to SWRCB. The report will be available to the public on SEW's website

http://www.iep.ca.gov/suisun_eco_workgroup/

SEW anticipates that SWRCB will hold a public workshop to discuss policy issues related to the SEW report sometime after January 2000.

Item 11 – Roaring River Levee Repair

Liz Cook:

Repairs to the Roaring River Distribution System began on July 14th and finished on August 31st.

Repairs consisted of :

- Installing Geofoam at three sites , one on the north levee and two on the south
- Raising the levees to their original heights
- Widening the levee roads to a constant width of 15 feet
- Placing aggregate base on most of the north and south levee roads
- Placing rip rap at erosion prone banks.

The work progressed as planned with 2 exceptions:

- 1) A miscalculation about the amount of geofoam to use at the first of the three fill sites occurred and more was installed than planned. This resulted in a shortage of material for the remaining sites. It was decided to fill the second site as planned but to forego the third (and smallest) site. Consequently only two of the three scheduled sites received geofoam.
- 2) An environmental compliance issue arose when several of the construction crew failed to maintain their vehicles on the levee roads. Equipment driven down levee slopes, past the levee toe and into the Marsh along the south levee damaged several areas of sensitive salt marsh harvest mouse habitat. Staff from the Department of Fish and Game inspected the damages on August 23. We are awaiting recommendations following their analysis of the impacts.

The Department of Water Resources Division Of Engineering made their final inspection on September 1st, and at that time expressed satisfaction with the results. The project was then declared finished and a Notice of Completion was mailed to the Army Corps of Engineers on September 13, 1999.

Item 12 – Morrow Island Levee Repairs/Fish Screen

No summary was submitted.

DFG REPORT

Item 13 – Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse Trapping

Melinda Dorin/Patty Finfrock:

Results of 1999 surveys for salt marsh harvest mice at existing and proposed Conservation Areas in Suisun Marsh.

SMHM Salt marsh harvest mouse

WHM Western harvest mouse

UnkHm Harvest mouse that could not be id'd to the species level, either juveniles or displaying mixed identification characteristics

Mus House mouse

Locations trapped	Species Caught					Trap	Trap
	SMHM	WHM	UnkHM	Mus	Vole	Nights	Success (%)
Hill Slough Area, Pond 1	23	0	4	4	0	100	23
Hill Slough Area, Area 4A	15	0	7	52	1	300	5
Grizzly Island Wildlife Area, Area 11	49	0	48	31	0	300	16
Grizzly Island Wildlife Area, Pond 12F	35	1	19	8	1	170	21
Grizzly Island Wildlife Area, Area 12	21	0	14	9	0	200	11
Hill Slough East	1	1	0	85	0	300	0.3
Hill Slough Area, Area 9	23	3	18	32	3	300	8
Goodyear Slough Unit	18	0	11	30	3	288	6
Joice Island	5	25	11	156	1	500	1
Island Slough	22	0	3	37	1	300	7.3
Pond 1B (traps set in upland habitat)	8	1	0	94	0	500	1.6

Salt marsh harvest mice were caught at all locations this year. Trap success was high in several locations. Areas where trap success was greater than 15% were only trapped for one night. All of the above areas besides Hill Slough East and Joice Island are proposed conservation areas. Hill Slough East and Joice Island are tidal areas already existing as conservation areas. Island Slough Unit has a 100-acre parcel that is the mitigation site for the MIDS. That area will also be counted towards the 2,500 acre goal of salt marsh harvest mouse conservation areas.

The next step:

The vegetation survey crew has sampled these same areas so that we can get a good idea of vegetation make-up.

Looking at all the components and SMPA ECAT will establish criteria for what makes up a good conservation area and accepting, or negating areas based on these characteristics. Develop good water management and monitoring plans to benefit the species and do more in depth studies; population estimates, and effects of different water management regimes.

Item 14 – SM Vegetation Survey

Melinda Dorin:

The vegetation survey crew are all finished with the initial sampling of plots in the Suisun Marsh. 201 plots were surveyed and 25 of those were mouse conservation areas.

Concurrently, the GIS folks have scanned all the photos into the computer and half of the photos have been delineated. All the GPS coordinates have been corrected.

Next steps:

Archive field data. Put data sheets with aerial photos and enter all of the data into the California Vegetation Information System database which was co developed with the California Native Plant Society. Enter all field data sheets and analyze the plant associations using environmental gradients. Identify groupings based on plant makeup, percent cover, salinity, elevation and other attributes. Use those associations to classify polygons on the aerial photos.

Accuracy assessment will take place in the spring by ground truthing areas to correlate photo signatures with actual habitat.

Not too much information will be released before the final report because there are many stages of accuracy assessment that can change plant associations and percent makeup by certain groups.

Item 15 – Anoxic Drainage in Peytonia/Boynton Sloughs

No summary was submitted.

SRCD REPORT

Item 16 – Renewal of USACE Regional General Permit

No summary was submitted.

Item 17 – Mosquito Abatement Program

No summary was submitted.